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# INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF ETHICS.

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## THE PSYCHOLOGY OF SOCIAL PROGRESS.\*

THE science of psychology has made extraordinary progress within the last half-century; and though for a science it is still in an early stage of development, it may now fairly be said to have constructed for itself a central group of conceptions from which to work out its future. In its terminology also it has abandoned its former use of terms made vague and fluctuating in meaning by current usage, and is gradually accumulating a well-defined terminology, such as every other science achieves for itself.

So far, however, these conceptions and this exact terminology have been for the most part confined to the text-books, and have not been used, so to say, in the open air; they have been applied only to the material collected by the professional psychologist, and the professional psychologist tends to draw his material from the limited field of instances in which his ideas are most strikingly illustrated. We have, indeed, the so-called psychological novel, which is essentially a modern product. In it, instead of being left to infer our hero's "states of mind" from his words and actions, as in the old times, we are led behind the scenes and shown his mental struggles much more clearly than he can ever have seen them himself; and it is conceivable that before long the play of his thoughts and feelings will be imparted to us in terms of the interaction

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\* A paper read before the Socratic Society, Birmingham.

of his apperceptive masses. But so far the novelist in his analysis has kept to the old indefinite terminology, and has made no attempt to explain his motives by the use of the deeper psychological conceptions.

I have just been reading Mr. Stout's very interesting and suggestive book on psychology, and thought it might be interesting to take two or three of the conceptions elaborated and explained in it and in Mr. James's book, and see whether they would give any interesting results when applied to some of our economic and social problems. Of course, in so far as they are true and adequate conceptions, they are already implied in those problems, and nothing more is necessary than to point out their bearings, and see how far they coincide with popular and academic conceptions on the same subject.

But first of all I want to point out that between psychology and sociology there is no line to be drawn. The latter science, if science it can yet be called, is based upon psychological analysis; the question as to how societies are formed can only be answered by appeal to the nature of men's minds; while those minds themselves which are the material of psychology are developed by living in societies. Let me quote from Maudsley's "Pathology of Mind," pp. 21, 22.

"To live in social relations implies a social nature within as well as a social medium without, for were there no community of kind such inter-relation could not be. Envy, emulation, malice, hatred, vanity, ambition, and the like human passions, exist only in relation to beings of the same kind; even a fool does not envy a good-looking horse or hate an ill-doing machine. Because all men are of one kind they are so infected by a panic of terror among themselves that they behave as foolishly and frantically as a flock of silly sheep, but they are not similarly affected by a panic amongst sheep. . . . Lacking a social medium for its nurture and display, hysteria would not attack the solitary inhabitant of a desert island; it would hardly be inspired to perform to the unheeding stars. In the absence of their proper stimuli, how can the fit reflexes take effect?"

In considering psychological conception, then, we are considering the bases of sociological science, and those conceptions themselves can only be really understood in connection with social relations.

Man, it has been said, but I cannot remember by whom,

is distinguished from the lower animals by his capacity for progressive wants. The lower animals have a certain larger or smaller cycle of desires, which being satisfied are quiescent, and incapable of further satisfaction until the same cycle begins again and runs its course of craving and satisfaction. With men, on the contrary, the satisfaction of the primitive wants may lead on through a constantly widening range of what we are pleased to call "higher wants;" in such wise that there seems to be absolutely no limit to their capacity for receiving new satisfactions. When men have their fill of food and clothing, they begin to desire luxuries and ornaments; when their appetites are satisfied, they turn their attention to dancing and music; the poet, the story-teller, and the artist then find a demand for their services, and so on until the primitive cycle may be almost lost sight of.

It is a truism to point out that this capacity for always discovering new wants is a necessary condition of human progress. Had it been possible to satisfy our natures with a mere sufficiency of food and clothing we should still be living in caves, huddled up in bear-skins and devouring the flesh of wild animals. Whether civilization owes most to the discontented men who were always wanting something new, or to the ingenious men who were always discovering new ways of making themselves acceptable to their companions, does not much matter. Both were essential to the process of developing the higher nature, and though there are those who maintain that men are unfortunate in proportion as they have developed higher wants,—*i.e.*, that they are better off when left undisturbed in the primitive cycle,—this opinion is not yet widely accepted.

But the fact that there are exceptions to the rule, that certain men would seem never to pass beyond the primitive cycle, thus forming an unprogressive "knot" in the flow of human progress, makes it of interest to inquire whether we cannot get behind the mere statement of the fact to some psychological explanation which will help us to account for the exceptions. Why is it that some people are content to pass their lives in eating, drinking, and sleeping, with intervals of

comparative quiescence, and are absolutely free from the stimulus of progressive desires? There is a chapter in Mr. Stout's book which seems to me to hold the clue to such an explanation. I refer to the chapter on "Conation and Cognitive Synthesis." I will try to explain briefly what I take to be the conception expounded in these and in other parts of the book.

The stream of consciousness in the individual life is represented to us as a current, not drifting aimlessly, but always directed towards some end, whether that end be itself in consciousness or not. To explain the existence of these "ends" towards which the stream is making, the conception is used of a "vital series,"—a conception originally applied, as I gather, in physiological connections. A "vital series" takes place when the equilibrium of mental elements has been disturbed by some shock or stimulus, and they are seeking a readjustment. In creatures still confined to the primitive cycle of wants the stimulus or shock will generally be due to such organic disturbances as lack of food, and the "vital series" will take the shape of a series of efforts to obtain food and so to restore the disturbed equilibrium. Then a period of more or less total quiescence or unconsciousness—corresponding to a state of mental equilibrium—will set in, until a fresh disturbance occurs within the organism, leading to a fresh readjustment.

Now, among the lower animals these readjustments are brought about very largely by means of instincts. "The peculiar feature of the life of animals," says Mr. Stout, "which prevents progressive development is the existence of instincts, which do for them what the human being must do for himself. Their inherited organization is such that they perform the movements adapted to supply their needs on the mere occurrence of an appropriate external stimulus."

To us these instincts have not been given. Possibly because in the early days they would have been quite inadequate to the protection of a weakly animal whose desires led him to want to eat things stronger than himself. A very simple instinct of pouncing brings the cat to the attainment of the

desired mouse; the human hunter relying upon as simple an impulse would be more likely to fall a victim to his quarry.

But, whatever the reason, the fact remains that man, having no sufficient instincts for the purpose, must achieve his ends by way of consciously devised means. For him the "vital series" leading to readjustment is a complicated one consisting of a number of steps, any one or all of which may be fully present to consciousness. Each of these steps in turn becomes the object of our striving; not at first for its own sake, but as leading to the end in view. The important point is that, having once been an end in the subordinate sense of being a means, it is henceforward capable of becoming an end in the principal sense. To use a simile: the traveller from London to Birmingham who goes by train will reach his end swiftly and surely, but will know little about the way he has come, and will not be tempted to travel any part of the route again until the need for going to Birmingham recurs. His journey is analogous to the instinctive action of the animal. The traveller who walks or rides will be longer on the way, and will have many difficulties to overcome; but every stage will have its interest for him. He will note *x* as being a good place to come for a short tour; and *y* as an interesting branch road to explore; and *z* as actually capable of yielding more satisfaction than Birmingham itself. Thus, every journey he takes will open up to him new possibilities for the future.

In a similar way every conation towards an end, however simple, that passes through conscious steps or "means," may open up fresh routes for future conations to pursue. Any one of the steps may achieve an independent interest and become desired for itself,—*e.g.*, the hunter glories in the chase long after his larder is full; the workman who takes up his handiwork for the sake of a living may come to enjoy it for its own sake; and the schoolboy who plies his task to avoid punishment becomes the scholar whom nothing can bribe to leave it. It is often noticed that the busier people are the more work they tend to undertake; while idle people are very hard to move. The real antithesis is not so much between busy and idle men as between men of many interests and men of

few. Every living interest opens the way to new ones, and the more energetically they are followed up the more possibilities reveal themselves. In fact, we must all have noticed that it is fatal to our peace of mind to take a keen interest in anything at all. The more often the mental equilibrium is disturbed the more it is exposed to fresh disturbances in the way of fresh interests.

How then account for any exceptions? Why do we find some people who show no signs of being progressive in their interests, and others who are actually limited to the primitive cycle, and seem incapable of breaking through it? In other words, how do people manage to achieve for their minds such a stable equilibrium as to become practically stationary?

For animals, we have said, instinct does it. Of course, their equilibrium is disturbed by the primitive cycle of recurrent wants, but it is restored again by simple instinctive action which does not trouble the mind with new interests. For them life, though not actually stationary (that would be a contradiction in terms), is not progressive, but repeats itself like a recurring decimal.

What instinct does for the animal, habit tends to do for man. In proportion as the means by which we reach our ends becomes easy and familiar it tends to become habitual, and unconscious in so far as each step ceases to attract special attention to itself. The vital series then takes place automatically; we are again travelling by train, quickly and surely, with little chance of losing the way, but also with no chance of opening up new ways. Then we also tend to become recurring decimals. We all know, probably, what it is to look back upon some period of our lives which seems to us now to have been full of possibilities, but which we passed through in an almost apathetic state, simply because we had become too habituated to it to notice. Then some great change or shock is forced upon the life, which is obliged to enter upon new ways, which may ultimately lead it into an altogether new world of interest.

Of course there is an immense gain if, *after* we have de-

veloped the higher interests, we can relegate the lower ones to automatic action. Then we send on our heavy luggage by train and leave ourselves free to explore new regions. But the danger is that the mind should never have broken through the primitive cycle, or should have been allowed to become automatic at a low level. The child who is never made to do things for himself, to find the solution to his own problems, will be slow to develop higher interests; also the man whose trust in Providence or his relations has taken the place occupied by instinct in the lower animals; and the same stationary condition must be expected in the man whose energies are so exhausted in satisfying the elementary needs that he never has a chance of following the suggestions to higher ones.

Mental struggle, then, is the first law of progress. Peace of mind must be left to the lower animals, if by peace of mind we mean nothing but freedom from cares and contrivings, puzzles and desires, and "obstinate questionings" of all kinds. What the child, the family, the whole community needs is constant disturbance of their mental equilibrium, combined with the necessity of consciously devising *for themselves* the vital series which is to bring renewed stability,—i.e., the satisfaction of desire. If any individual or class is cut off from this necessity, whether by the stagnation of habit, or the crushing weight of circumstance, or because they are unfortunate enough to have all their wants anticipated, they are as much cut off from the possibility of developing higher interests as the jelly-fish or the penny-in-the-slot automaton.

Now, I am well aware that we hear a great deal about the overstrain of modern life, and we are told sometimes that the great mass of the people have no time to lead a higher life; we are even threatened with an enormous increase of insanity, owing to the high pressure at which we live. My own impression is that, as I have been arguing, this high pressure is nearly all to the good, and infinitely more hopeful than any approach to stagnation. In support of this opinion, I will quote from Maudsley's "Pathology of Mind," pp. 29, 30.

"The full and varied exercise of mind elicited by a variety of interests is no less conducive to health and strength of mind than a full and varied exercise of



body is to its health and strength. The intellect suffers more from rusting in disuse than it ever does from its utmost use. One fact which the statistics of insanity in England has clearly shown is that the purely agricultural counties furnish the largest percentage of insanity in proportion to the population; that is to say, there is most madness where there are the fewest ideas, the most simple feelings, and the coarsest desires and ways. . . . Railways and steamboats may have done more to prevent insanity by the variety, than they have done to produce it by the hurry, of life which they have occasioned. The more numerous and various the impressions to which a mind is subject in the complex relations of life, the less likely is its balance to be upset by the exaggerated preponderance of any one of them."

The next conception of which I shall speak is that of *apperception*, in the modern sense of the term. It seems to me to throw much light on the way in which the mind develops, and therefore to be of great practical importance to all who are either interested in or desirous of influencing the mental development of others.

The old idea of the mind, we shall remember, was that of a clear surface becoming gradually written over with the experiences of life in much the same way as this sheet of paper was gradually written over, one line after the other. Or, to take a better illustration, the conception was more like that of a nursery screen which is pasted all over with a medley of pictures bearing no special relation to each other. (One of the older philosophers—Malebranche, I believe—spoke of ideas as actual substances, emanating from objects and adhering to or in the minds with which they happened to come in contact.)

In place of this crude idea of a mind which is being pieced together from the outside, there is now substituted that of a growing and organic system of ideas, thoughts, feelings, beliefs, and emotions; developing, indeed, from the simplest germ, but from first to last influencing its own development by its selection of the elements which are to enrich it, and by its influence upon them. The process is analogous to that by which a plant appropriates nourishment from the surrounding soil and atmosphere. Its growth depends upon the elements received from without, but, while they affect its growth and constitution, it in turn completely transforms their characteristics in the process of assimilation.

Mr. Stout's definition of apperception is "the process by which a mental system appropriates a new element, or otherwise receives a fresh determination." The essence of the process, and that to which I wish to call special attention, is that it is not a mere addition of new to old, but that the appropriation of new by old involves modification of both.

The modification of old by new is a more or less familiar conception to us. We speak of a man's views and opinions changing and mellowing with experience, and we feel, as we look back to younger days, how much the years have done to alter the organization and temper of our own minds. But we must carry this principle down from generalities into detail, and recognize that every new perception of whatever kind, in so far as it is fairly taken into the mind, is not only "one more" unit there, but alters the constitution of the whole group of ideas into which it is received.

Now the blending of new and old being of this intimate kind has for consequence,

(1) That nothing of a totally new nature *can* be received into the mind; it is impossible to give a new idea to minds not in some way prepared for it. Just as the plant can only assimilate the nourishment suited to it, so the mind can only accept elements to which there is already something analogous in its constitution. Where the new perception is only *relatively* new, has in it some familiar elements, it will be apperceived or received by that part of the mental system which is similar; and it is by this way of partial similarity or identity that the mind grows.

(2) What the mind sees depends upon what it already is. The town child who called a fern a pot of green feathers *could* not see what the country child or what the botanist would see, but saw what its past experience enabled it to see. Thus there is a tremendous tendency for the mind in receiving new experiences to change them into something more like what it already possesses. Indeed, in so far as it does receive them, it *must* so change them. The disappearance of the savage before civilization is said to be largely due to his sheer inability to "take in" all the new ideas and objects by which

he is confronted; the mind is killed by its futile efforts. But where the novelty is less overwhelming there is no limit to the ingenuity of the mind in interpreting, or misinterpreting, what it sees by what it already knows, so that it may come to some sort of understanding: a fact which is full of significance with respect to the success or failure of foreign missions.

This is what makes intercourse between people of different "upbringings" apt to be difficult, and should make us specially careful in placing our ideas before minds less developed (or differently developed) than our own, without making sure how they are interpreted. One man's meat is another's poison is far truer in the spiritual than in the physical world.

How does this tell on our question of social development? *Prima facie*, it seems to tend greatly against the possibility of our achieving any state of society in which the units shall be all the same; shall be, that is, individuals having the same views, interests, and mental experiences. For in the mental life differentiation is cumulative; not only do no two minds ever perceive an object the same way, but their perceiving it differently introduces a further element of difference into the mind which will affect all after experience.

And yet we all live in the same world, and *do* have similar views about it, and *are* able to come to some sort of understanding about our interests. That I take to be due mainly to two facts:

(a) That certain fundamental characteristics of affection and gregariousness form a common basis upon which all individual life is erected.

(b) That we are rational beings, and therefore share in a common mental organization which is reflected into our social organization. *Difference of detail does not involve difference of structure.* Two kinds of roses may differ in almost every external detail, but none the less both are roses.

I have only time to deal with the second of these facts,—that of our common mental organization. This is a conception which seems to have been entirely left out of sight by our Associationist Psychologists. J. S. Mill tells us in his

autobiography how he regards his father's most important work to be the fundamental doctrine of the formation of all character by circumstance, through the universal principle of association; through, that is, the association of pleasure with beneficial, and pain with injurious action. If this were a sufficient account of the matter, the well-trained dog or idiot should be as capable of developing character as the wisest man, for in both the principle of association can be made active.

But the once famous principle of association is now being relegated to its proper place as the mere machinery by which higher principles of organization develop. It is recognized that in proportion as the mind reaches higher stages of development it ceases to consist of mere trains of perceptions, thoughts, and ideas linked together by associations of time, space, and similarity, and has a definitely organized and complex content, dominated in its workings by definite interests and principles. *Noetic synthesis* is the term which Mr. Stout uses to describe this organization in the higher levels of intelligence. "In any given stage of thought," he tells us (Vol. II., p. 3), "the next step is partly determined by the controlling influence of the central idea of the topic with which the whole series is concerned, and partly by the special idea which has last emerged. In so far as it is determined by the special idea which has last emerged, the principle of association is operative: in so far as it is determined by the central idea of the whole topic, noetic synthesis is operative."

All purposive, rational thought and action, then, is guided by noetic synthesis; all casual, aimless speech or action, all chatter or punning or mere trifling, much narrative, and, again, all automatic action is guided by association alone.

Those who have listened much to the talk of uneducated women know what an aimless trickle of associated trifles it is apt to be. The listener can find no rational clue to the thought by which it is prompted; it is a narrative of utterly insignificant sayings and doings, only saved by some kind of observance of time sequence from descending into the meaningless jargon of the idiot. There is nothing to show that the minds of many men

do not drift in just the same way, though they find less ready utterance in speech. Their lives certainly show the same absence of "noetic synthesis;" day drifts after day in the same aimless fashion, all is ordered by habit, chance, association; nothing by purpose. Theirs is the very type of character formed by the great principle of association, for at every movement they sedulously avoid the immediately unpleasant and seek the immediately pleasant. Let us quote from Stout's "Psychology," p. 34.

"The varying degrees of noetic synthesis . . . broadly correspond to the degree of intelligence of the individual, either in general, or in special directions. The more developed it is, the less conspicuous by comparison is the part played by association. A person of disciplined intelligence in narrating an occurrence brings together the really relevant points as parts of a systematic whole, discarding whatever is superfluous. A country yokel seems unable to proceed otherwise than by casual associations of proximity in time and space. The important items are for him so embedded in a flood of irrelevant details that it is difficult to disentangle from his chaotic narrative the essential circumstances. In other words, there is present in the one case a mental synthesis which is absent in the other."

Now this mental synthesis corresponds to a higher and more complex grouping of mental contents. Experience, as it comes to a mind of this type, ranges itself in subordination to the principles and purposes which are dominant, and the conception of a mere stream of consciousness develops into that of a *mental system*.

We may picture this systematization of the mind as a grouping of mental elements according to the various topics or interests which predominate; much as in highly civilized communities men are grouped according to their interests into families, clubs, unions, nationalities, religious and political sects, and so on. The higher the type of mind and the development of character, the more complex and complete will be its organization according to interests and purposes.

If this newer conception of mental organization be a true one, it seems clear that the principle of association, as translated into a system of rewards and punishments, will not do more than develop a quite common-place type of character. It may be the best means we can use in certain directions towards restraining tendencies which would otherwise be in-

jurious to the community; as a positive and educational principle it is of little use. All wise teachers, I believe, recognize now that the best way of dealing with naughty children is to absorb their whole attention with some *interest*, which will not only leave no energy to spare for naughtiness, but will of itself tend to organize their minds, to subordinate mental elements to a *purpose*, and so to develop character.

Again, why is it that some of us think it undesirable that rich people, or the state, should play the part of special Providence to the poor? The lazy answer reverts to the principle of association and says, "you must let them feel the consequences of being drunken, or idle, or improvident, and then they will strive harder against it." But this clearly applies only to some few among the poor, and even with reference to those few indicates only the beginning of the better things we hope for. The fuller answer is, that for every man interests naturally arise which are capable of organizing his life and developing his character, the interests of supplying his own wants—higher and lower—and those of his family; and if these interests are taken out of his hands, without the introduction of others equally powerful, he is simply left to drift without the possibility of development. The only way of really helping a man is to strengthen him by education, timely assistance, opportunities, what you will, to meet his own difficulties and organize his own life; and so also of any class in the community, only by their own activities can they develop progressive interests, and only by purposes and progressive interests can they organize their lives successfully.

We might apply the same idea to political education. We shall hardly make much advance in this direction until our politicians cease to appeal solely or mainly to the special desires of their constituents,—which is really nothing but the system of rewards (*i.e.*, bribes) over again,—and seek to interest them in wider issues. So far as people are encouraged and helped to devise ways of meeting their own needs they must necessarily find their way sooner or later to the wider issues; but so far as material benefactions are forced upon them from without, they will no doubt accept them, but will

lose in progressive power more than they gain in material wealth.

Take as one instance out of many the question of old age pensions, which at one time threatened to become the chief political interest of the day. It is in no sense a scheme devised by the class which would benefit, nor have they shown any energy in pushing it or in devising ways and means. Of course they will take it when offered, and of course they will like a candidate for election better for offering than for opposing it. But for the very reason that it comes as a wind-fall from without, having nothing to do with their own plans, it may do little to really improve their position; while it will cut them off from one department of energetic development in which very good results had already begun to appear.

Finally, a conception which I take to be all important from the point of view of social progress is that of the wider self; or, as we may call it, the elastic self. What do we mean by the self? Some have been known to say it is the body, others that it is the mind or soul, others again, the mind or soul plus the body. From a psychological point of view it is enough to say that it is the mind or soul, and that includes the body and much more beside, for it includes all experience. The soul literally is, or is built up of, all its experience; and such part of this experience, or soul life, as is active at any given time or for any given purpose constitutes the self at that time and for that purpose. We know how the self enlarges and expands as we enter upon new duties, acquire new interests, contract new ties of friendship; we know how it is mutilated when some sphere of activity is cut off, or some near friend snatched away by death. It is literally, and not metaphorically, a part of *ourselves* which we have lost.

But if, then, all we know is self, what shall we do with our useful old words selfish and unselfish? For practical purposes, of course, we can use them just as before. The important point is that to a great extent we get rid of the apparent incompatibility between egoism and altruism, between the so-called self-regarding and extra-regarding conduct. The unselfish nature becomes now the self with wider interests, or the self in which

the wider interests predominate over the narrower. The father who feels himself more mutilated by loss of wife and family than by loss of a limb does so, not because he is specially altruistic, but because his family was a far more vital part of his self than his limb. The loss of reputation, or injury to the social self, is worse to many than the loss of health or injury to the material self. The patriot who sacrifices all private interests to the welfare of his country has subordinated the narrower self to the wider. We no longer, therefore, need to teach self-abnegation, but the enlarging of the self, the finding it in wider interests.

Here we are obviously at a point where psychology merges into sociology; indeed, we cannot draw any line between them. Here we have two men whose more important interests are the same; who strive for the same ends, are actuated by the same motives, and respond in the same way to a given stimulus. In so far as this is the case they have a common self, or their interests are so organized as to be correlative to each other; they play into each other in such a way as to supplement and support, so that neither is itself without the other to complete it. This, of course, is the secret of family life; and this, when we take it over a wider circle, is the justification for the theory of the general will of a community.

The self varies with time and occasion according to the mental elements or apperceptive masses which predominate. In other words, we are ruled by different motives, desires, and affections according to the circumstances under which we are placed. Sometimes we undergo the painful experience of having two sets of motives struggling for predominance, and according as the self is well or ill organized the result will be heroic or disastrous. Do we always realize how much heroism is involved in a strike in those cases where the men subordinate their own material needs and domestic affections,—not from fear of the union, but from a true recognition of wider issues? They may sometimes be mistaken heroes, but they are heroes none the less; and there is no limit to the possible progress of a community of men with powers such as these.

But this progress may be indefinitely retarded if the motives



by which they are actuated are not themselves progressive, and such as will lead to a continuously wider development of the self. Any propaganda, for instance, which appeals only or mainly to material needs, will fail to raise its followers to any high level of civilization or happiness, for it is concentrating the attention of the self on comparatively narrow and unprogressive issues. And any propaganda which thrives by the inculcation of class hatred and jealousy works for the destruction of its disciples as surely as for that of the community; for hatred and jealousy are disintegrating forces leading alike to madness in the individual self and civil wars in the state.

All one-sided and emotional teaching (*irrational* teaching) has this disintegrating effect. At first it may seem successful; the mind seems to acquire new experience and to respond to new motives, and only time can show whether the interests and the motives are such as will enable it to organize life successfully,—*i.e.*, in correspondence with the wider interests of the community. For instance, to illustrate by extreme cases, under certain conditions, such as the influence of some strong emotion, certain elements of the self can be maintained in predominance to the total exclusion of others, which are, technically speaking, *inhibited*,—prevented from coming into action. This is the explanation of one type of conversion, such as that practised by the Salvation Army. Experience seems to show that there is no permanence in conversions of this type, unless supplemented by the acquisition of really rational and organizing ideas. The bad self is merely stupefied or drugged, and sooner or later reasserts itself with all its old power. Cases of hypnotism are analogous; almost all the mental elements are lulled into stupor; the self becomes identified with one small group of presentations dominated by the operator, who thus acquires complete power over his attenuated victim. But influence of this kind can have no real organizing power over the true life; it works by suppression and not by development; and is always liable to be frustrated by anything which arouses the fuller and wider self.

So with much of the teaching which is offered to our

working-classes to-day. It gains its influence not by presenting them with wider issues and stronger sympathies, which would enable them to harmonize their lives with that of the community, and so to share in as well as to advance its progress; but by concentrating the attention of the class upon its narrower self, and by exciting disintegrating emotions. The elements of a prosperous and progressive community must play into, support, and recognize each other just as the elements of a sane and progressive mind must support and recognize each other. The growth of wider interests should mean, not the suppression, but the fuller development of narrower ones; and what is needed in social as in individual life is the introduction of organizing and not of disintegrating ideas.

HELEN BOSANQUET.

LONDON.

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## THE MORAL LIFE OF THE EARLY ROMANS.

THE historian of morals sets about a task which is almost impossible. For its accomplishment several things are necessary; yet they can rarely be attained. He must know the forms in which, from time to time, the moral ideal presented itself, the adverse influences to which it was opposed, and the amount of the effort which the individual spirit made to reach it. These difficulties are so great that some have almost forbidden us to pass judgment upon the moral character of a single human being; much more, therefore, ought we to hesitate in passing judgment upon a whole nation. At any rate, we ought to express our conclusions in terms that answer to the uncertainty and difficulty of the argument. For we have to deal not so much with facts as with the relations that hold between them; not so much with actions as with their value. Everything depends, then, upon our applying suitable standards and upon our viewing things in their proper perspective. Hence we shall begin by marking off the place of Rome in the moral education of the world so that we may come to her life with the right expectation, and may not demand attain-